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ABSTRACT

Based on ethnographic research on Puerto Ricans on the island and mainland, this paper examines why Nuyoricans' identities are disparaged by island and mainland Puerto Ricans. Nuyoricans are Puerto Ricans, especially in New York, who mix North American and Puerto Rican cultural traits. Many have grown up traveling between the island and mainland. One reason that Puerto Ricans tend to reject Nuyoricans is the negative stereotypes assigned to Nuyoricans from which other Puerto Ricans wish to distance themselves. Also, in many Puerto Ricans' eyes, the Nuyorican represents what is considered worst about the dominant North American culture and a betrayal of traditional Puerto Rican ways. Commentary on Nuyoricans is really commentary on Puerto Rico's relationship with the United States and its effect on the Puerto Rican culture. The Nuyorican brings the authenticity of today's Puerto Rican into question due to extensive interaction with the United States. This paper examines the meaning of the Nuyorican identity for Puerto Ricans on both the island and the mainland; describes Puerto Rican identity; defines Puerto Ricans, Puerto-Rican Americans, and Nuyoricans; examines the culture of Nuyoricans; and discusses Puerto-Ricans' problems as immigrants to New York. (SM)

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WHY "NUYORICANS" ARE GIVEN THE COLD-SHOULDER BY OTHER PUERTO RICANS

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Why "Nuyoricans" Are Given the Cold-Shoulder by Other Puerto Ricans

Abstract

Based on comparative ethnographic research on Puerto Ricans on the Island and Mainland, this paper examines why "Nuyoricans" identities are disparaged by Island and Mainland Puerto Ricans. "Nuyoricans" are Puerto Ricans, especially in New York, that mix North American and Puerto Rican cultural traits. Many have grown up going back and forth between the Island and Mainland. What is it that Nuyoricans represent for Puerto Ricans that leads to their rejection? One answer is that there are negative stereotypes assigned to Nuyoricans from which other Puerto Ricans wish to distance themselves. Perhaps more importantly, however, I believe in Puerto Ricans' eyes, the Nuyorican represents what is considered worst about the dominant North American culture, and a betrayal of traditional Puerto Rican ways. Commentary on Nuyoricans is really commentary on Puerto Rico's relationship with the U.S. and its affect on the Puerto Rican culture. The Nuyorican brings the authenticity of today's Puerto Rican into question due to extensive interaction with the U.S.. This paper examines the meaning of the "Nuyorican" identity for Puerto Ricans on both the Island and the Mainland.

This paper examines why "Nuyorican" identities are disparaged by Island and Mainland Puerto Ricans, causing Puerto Ricans to discriminate against "Nuyoricans." "Nuyoricans" are Puerto Ricans, especially in New York, that mix North American and Puerto Rican cultural traits. The fact that Islander discourse

exists on Nuyorican identities shows that it gets at some core values of Puerto Ricans and how they want to represent themselves. Discourse on Nuyoricans reveals what people think Puerto Ricans are and are not—issues crucial to ethnic and national identity. This paper is based on comparative ethnographic research on religious healing, identity, and migration among Puerto Ricans.

In order to examine what is it that Nuyoricans represent for Puerto Ricans that leads to their rejection, we will briefly consider Puerto Rican identity in general. The lack of consensus found in what it means to be "Puerto Rican," "Puerto Rican-American," or "Nuyorican" reveals how problematic Puerto Rico's relationship with the U.S. has made defining Puerto Rican identity. Difficulties Puerto Ricans face in New York and on the Island are also examined. These discussions will illuminate our understanding of the position of Nuyoricans in Puerto Rican society and thought, and why other Puerto Ricans distance themselves from Nuyoricans. Following this, we will go over some participant characteristics and the methods used to conduct this study. Last, we discuss what studying Nuyoricans can tell us about Puerto Rican struggles for authenticity in the face of culture contact and change.

Puerto Rican Identity

Puerto Rican identity is dependent on and complicated by many factors, including historical antecedents, Puerto Rico's unusual political status, U.S. citizenship, widespread migration between the U.S. Mainland and the Island, and internal divisions within the Island society. Commonwealth status grants Puerto Ricans U.S. citizenship and the unusual freedom of unregulated bi-directional migration between the two countries (Fitzpatrick 1971). Education and Island job shortages bring Puerto Ricans temporarily or permanently to the Mainland, providing abundant opportunity for culture contact between Puerto Rican and North American cultures to occur.[1]

Contact results in the strengthening of the effects of U.S. cultural dominance on the Island via return migrants. Even those not involved directly with migration are "affected by the actions of migrants" who return to the Island, visit, or send remittances to Island relatives (Grasmuck & Pessar 1991:203, EPICA Task Force

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[1]Most Puerto Ricans came to the Mainland seeking improved economic prosperity due to Island job scarcity and better Mainland opportunities. Some professionals tried to return to the Island, but could not find jobs there, and returned to the Mainland. Others came to the U.S. to join relatives, to receive larger public assistance checks, due to the breakup of households, to escape domestic abuse or to help their children learn English. Most planned to return to the Island to retire.

1976). Return migrants' acculturated ideology, culture and lifeways, threaten preservationists of traditional Puerto Rican culture. Circular and return migration have both negative and positive effects on insular culture, providing opportunities for culture change.

Extensive contact between Puerto Rican and North American cultures has shaped lifestyles and attitudes, confusing what it means to be "Puerto Rican" versus "Puerto Rican-American." People's self-identifications on the Island and Mainland reflect the historical and existing tensions between Puerto Ricans with different views on what relationship should exist between the U.S. and Puerto Rico. Problems defining these terms capture some of the tension and ambiguity about the Island's past, present, and future, and provides a foil for the term "Nuyorican."

Defining Puerto Ricans, Puerto Rican-Americans and Nuyoricans

For some people, the cultural mixing of traits that make up the Puerto Rican-American also constitute the Nuyorican. For example, a respondent answered that a "True" Puerto Rican-

American was: The "New York Rican." Another respondent felt the term Puerto Rican-American (or Nuyorican) did not apply to her. She admits that she probably is a Puerto Rican-American technically, but she considers herself a Puerto Rican.[2] She stated the Puerto Rican-American was either someone who was born in the U.S. of Puerto Rican parents, or who was born in Puerto Rico, who "has assimilated and accepted American ways," and is "not doing [Puerto Rican] cultural things."

The participant above exemplifies a very interesting and prevalent issue: Some people who grew up on the Mainland around many other Puerto Ricans believe that they still received enough of the Puerto Rican culture to make them fully Puerto Rican, rather than Puerto Rican-Americans or Nuyoricans. For example, this same participant rejects the Nuyorican label because she feels entirely Puerto Rican. When she was an older teen in New York, she was called a Nuyorican, and got angry, insisting that she was a Puerto Rican, not a Nuyorican. She did not like others questioning this. Being called a Nuyorican was being told that she was not a real Puerto Rican, which she felt was untrue.

[2] This participant and her mother were born in N.Y., but her father and grandparents were all born in Puerto Rico. She grew up in N.Y. and N.J., with Summers and a semester exchange program in Puerto Rico.

New York Puerto Rican community members are sometimes more vehemently Puerto Rican and more aware of the Puerto Rican culture than Islanders (who may take it for granted) since they are surrounded by other cultures on the Mainland. Another participant's response to what made someone a "True" Puerto Rican and a "True" Puerto Rican-American shows this:

> This [is] hard to answer in a few sentences. [I have] talked with other Puerto Ricans and they always say being born in Puerto Rico makes someone a true Puerto Rican. That if [they are] born in New York or [some] other part of U.S., that [they were not] a true Puerto Rican. But [I am not sure I] agree because [I] know people even more Puerto Rican sometimes that were born and grew up here.

Pride in being Puerto Rican was found to be pretty universal (except regarding negative stereotypes of Puerto Ricans). But many Puerto Ricans living in a Mainland Puerto Rican community thought the Puerto Rican flag was more important to them as a symbol of identity than it is to Islanders.[3]

The participant quoted above feels that her son, who is one more generation removed from Puerto Rico, is a more representative Puerto Rican-American than she is, since he does

[3] Although this may not be universally true due to its past political implications. The Puerto Rican flag was associated with the Nationalist Party and the Puerto Rican independence movement in the past (Morris 1995).

not speak Spanish or know Puerto Rican history. She thinks that some things may be kept, but other are lost from the Puerto Rican culture with Puerto Rican-Americans. Her son is more assimilated into the North American culture than she is, although she also grew up in the U.S.. For her, growing up in the New York Puerto Rican community approximates growing up on the Island in many ways, in terms of supporting the Puerto Rican cultural identification.

This same idea was also mentioned by other participants. A man "raised in New York [until] age 17" reported that, "In New York all Puerto Ricans know their food and customs." Another participant felt more loyalty to Puerto Rico than to the U.S. (even though she was born, raised, and lived all but 3 years in the U.S.):

> Because…she never experienced prejudice in Puerto Rico. [She] loves it out there too. [She] would like to [say] to both, but New York and Puerto Rico are like the same—but [there is] less prejudice in Puerto Rico. So [she] leans more towards the Island…

This same participant also reported that although she sees herself as "[m]ostly bicultural/Puerto Rican-American, because [she was] born here—[but] in New York most [people] say Puerto Rican, not Puerto Rican-American."

Other participants found the New York Puerto Rican community to be like Puerto Rico in the context of describing religious experiences in New York. They felt small changes might occur when religions were brought from the Island to New York, but that their character and ethos stayed mostly the same. For example, when asked if the meaning of participation in religious healing differed in Puerto Rico compared to in the U.S., a participant responded:

> [I] grew up in New York City. [I can not] say for Puerto Rico itself, [but for the] Puerto Rican community in New York City: churches were a lot more emotional than the American churches that [I] was exposed to. I guess that [it] would probably be [the] same across the board.

Another person responded: "Yes—[they are] two different cultures. In Puerto Rico, [you] can bring beliefs over to New York without too much change…"

Other participants define Nuyoricans by loss of aspects of the Puerto Rican culture, especially language. When asked what is a "True" Puerto Rican-American, a respondent stated that: "Nuyoricans, they lose their identity by not speaking their language, staying away from the culture, the music, and the food. [They] eat American food instead…" This also defines Puerto

Rican-Americans as equivalent to Nuyoricans. Nuyorican is defined by loss of the Puerto Rican culture/identity and by assimilation of the North American culture. Language is among the first things mentioned.

We are reminded that perspective is relative by a bilingual participant born in New York, who talks about the adaptive use of English as a positive thing for him, while others focus on the loss of Spanish. He says he "Suffered lots of racial prejudice in New York," [and linguistic intolerance] which reminded him that he is Puerto Rican [rather than North American]. "I use English to my advantage," he reported.

Participants in the present study varied on what elements they thought made someone a "True" Puerto Rican and a "True" Puerto Rican American. This question is similar to Morris's (1995) question to her participants, "What is Puerto Ricanness?" A "True" Puerto Rican is defined in opposition to being a Puerto Rican-American or a Nuyorican, according to one respondent:

> He is Puerto Rican, a person [who] eat[s] rice and beans, dance[s] the way we do, depending on [his] background, [and] speak[s] Spanish without hiding it. We are completely different from the U.S.…

Participants did not agree whether one had to be born or raised on the Island to be a "True" Puerto Rican, or if one was automatically a "True" Puerto Rican-American if one was born or raised in the U.S. to Puerto Rican parents. The following two participants reflect this ambiguity in their response to what things make someone a "True" Puerto Rican:

> Some [people] say [that] being born there [Puerto Rico]—[like her ex-husband]. [He] says she is not [born there] so [she is] not Puerto Rican, and [her] sister mentioned [it too]. [However, she feels that] just [the] feeling you have for your culture [makes you Puerto Rican]. Puerto Rican families [are] very affectionate and friendly. [She defines a "True" Puerto Rican American as someone with] loyalty to a country—[the] Island where [your] family is from—American—Puerto Rican but born in New York.

The second participant seems to agree and says a "True" Puerto Rican is:

> Conscious of [Puerto Rican] history, what [it has] been, what [they have] gone through, [the] culture, food, music, traditions, if [you] love the Island, and the people even if [you were] not born there. If [you] embrace the Island culture and people, know it, feel it, and probably live there.

She says an example is "people from New York—It is half for [me]—there are idiosyncrasies that you acquire living on the Island, [I] think it is best to be raised…" She goes on to say that a

"True" Puerto Rican-American is the "same thing—[a person who] respects the U.S. and loves it. We are American citizens as Puerto Ricans." She adds to this that "it is best to be raised [on the Island]," however.

The category of Puerto Rican American did not exist, according to some participants, while others insisted "Puerto Rican" equals "American," so the term is redundant (since Puerto Ricans are born U.S. citizens). Other people mention identifying as a U.S. citizen, but not necessarily as part of the distinction between being a "True" Puerto Rican and a "True" Puerto Rican American. One male participant stated he "always" thought about his ethnic or national identity: "If I go to Tijuana, Mexico—[I] tell them I'm an American citizen born in New York."

Nuyoricans

Some Puerto Ricans are said to have lost their cultural orientation by being caught between Island and Mainland cultures, values, and identities (Seda Bonilla 1973). Puerto Ricans known as "Nuyoricans" migrated to or grew up in the Puerto Rican community in New York, and sometimes migrated back to the Island, or migrated back and forth many times. Circular migration

was believed to cause identity conflicts among the youth who grew up this way because they did not absorb either culture well enough to be adapted to either place: they identified with neither the Island nor the Mainland, and were rejected by both (Flores 1993, Morris 1995, Muñoz 1995, Mohr 1982, Fitzpatrick 1971). Mohr (1982) explains that it is difficult to be considered a "spic" in New York, and a Nuyorriqueño, Neorican or Nuyorican when returning to the Island—with nobody considering you either an 'American' or a "real" Puerto Rican (who never would have left the Island at all according to some people).[4]

Many participants think that a Puerto Rican and a Nuyorican are quite different [so we may infer from this that they think growing up on the Island differs from growing up in New York]. A female participant who embraces the term Nuyorican classifies herself as:

> "Other—Nuyorican—it's a different culture. It is like a border person. Nobody wants to claim you. [You can not] say you are Puerto Rican [on] the Island [or] they would laugh at you. And Americans [say] that you are not an American because of the accent—they call you Puerto Rican. People stereotype you but you [do not] fit…"

[4] This problem might be resolved if Puerto Rico became a State of the U.S.

Commenting on the linguistic differences between them, she says she is a Nuyorican, and "associates speak[ing] Spanish and English" with them. However, she grew up in New York before there was a big Puerto Rican community there, and learned formal Spanish at home:

> [I can not] relate to the generation now in New York because [I have] been in California [for] so long (and because when [I] was growing up in New York [it was] before the big waves of Puerto Ricans came)...[It is] hard to understand today's generation. [They speak] Spanglish—[they] make up words or [put] accents in other places.

Not being able to identify oneself as either Puerto Rican or North American due to language, accent, and not being accepted as either one is why she identifies as a Nuyorican. Not fitting into either of the other two categories makes her choose a third category that integrates or mediates between the two, or maybe transcends the two to create something new and unique—its own entity.

Perhaps identifying as a third culture or mediating designation, as a Nuyorican, rather than as a Puerto Rican or a North American, can give a person a sense of security in knowing who they are. As this independent-minded respondent reports, she was a

> Nuyorican born in New York. My family came from Puerto Rico...I identify myself more like a Latina—that is my biggest identity. If you identify with the culture [that is] your biggest identity then you will be comfortable. I know who I am without a lot of flagwaving. I get thrown out [of Puerto Rican events] because I [do not] really belong.[5]

Her sense of alienation from both Puerto Ricans and North Americans is evident, and she chooses to identify as a Latina or Nuyorican instead.

A California participant who was born, raised, and spent most of his adult life on the Island related how he saw Nuyoricans as a former teacher. He said for a "True" Puerto Rican-American:

> [The] majority [are] born here or live here many years—[they] lose a lot of [the] ethnicity of being a true Puerto Rican. They are between two cultures and it is confusing. Some [do not] want to be identified with [the] Puerto Rican culture and refuse to speak Spanish. Some go back and forth [between the Island and the Mainland]—[as with the] Nuyorican. [He] saw [the] problem with this as a teacher—[he] has a nephew like this—[it can] cause confusion...

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[5] Some representations of Nuyoricans present them as creative actors playing with their "borderness" (Flores 1993). Rather than finding marginality threatening, they celebrate it as the *sui generis* source of new social movements among Puerto Ricans who have migrated to or grown up in New York. Flores (1993) discusses a kind of creativity of combining the two cultures to make a new culture through this sense of "borderness" to create new cultural forms. Within this group, Spanglish, biculturalism, and bilingualism are flexibly used to meet the group's needs for self-expression (Mohr 1982, Flores 1993).

This participant views circular migration negatively as confusing, and defines the Nuyorican or Puerto Rican-American in terms of negatives, rather than in terms of assimilative positives or the adaptive value of learning two cultures.

Some Islanders blame Nuyoricans for bringing the violence, street drugs, gangs and crime of New York City to the Island, so that parts of the Island are no longer safe and people live with iron cages around their houses.[6] Nuyoricans are also noted for bilingual and unconventional speech patterns (Flores 1993).[7] Islanders reported that Nuyoricans did not speak proper Spanish or English, spoke a mixture of the two languages, and made up words in Spanish from English words. Mohr (1982) adds to this list the use of the syntax of one language in the sentence structure of the other language (inappropriately but creatively). Concluding this

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[6] However, Mohr (1982) notes that part of what gives Nuyoricans a bad name in this regard is the use by Latin American and Hispanic Caribbean illegal aliens (including criminals and drug runners) of fake Puerto Rican birth or baptismal certificates to get into the U.S. Once in New York, they may become part of the Puerto Rican community, with no one realizing they are not Puerto Rican. Whatever crime they commit or lack of assimilation they undergo is then attributed to the Puerto Rican community.

[7] Flores (1993) believes the marginality or "borderness" of Puerto Rican Nuyoricans, circular and return migrants creates a liminality which promotes new cultural forms via cultural mixing and culture change.

section, we consider the problems Nuyoricans face when they return to or visit the Island.

Puerto Ricans' Problems Faced as Immigrants to New York

Discussion of the problems faced by Puerto Ricans in New York will allow us to understand how Nuyoricans got into the situations that stereotypes about them both reflect and exaggerate. According to Mohr (1982: xii-xiii), the bulk of migrants to New York during and following World War II were poor, uneducated adults. Starting over in a new land, culture, and language, many without having needed job skills, and finding themselves barred from joining some labor unions, made finding work difficult. Success required immigrants to learn how to make the new system work for them.[8] (Mohr 1982, Fitzpatrick 1971)

Migrants brought their traditions with them, and formed neighborhoods (or *barrios*) where they concentrated, "which

[8] Mohr (1982: 125) points to the "small but persistent sentiment favoring Puerto Rican independence, which provides a face-saving rationale for failure to 'make it' in Gringolandia." From the Independentistas's point of view: it is ok not to do well in the U.S., so that U.S.-resident Puerto Ricans' discontent fuels the push for the Island's independence. A camp in the Puerto Rican independence movement says Puerto Ricans who come to the Mainland should not replace too many Puerto Rican cultural values with North American cultural values. However, this kind of adaptation of values is believed to be necessary to 'make it in (North) America.'

[foster] emotional security but [retard] assimilation. Since most immigrants are poor, poverty thickens in the ghetto and prepares the way for sickness, misery, and crime" (Mohr 1982: 124). The barrio itself came to symbolize "both acceptance and alienation" for Puerto Ricans (Mohr 1982: xiii).

Migrants' offspring face a conflict between their parents' ways, language and culture, and those of North America. As youngsters, they both want to adapt and to please their parents. At adolescence, they may rebel against their parents' restrictiveness and customs in favor of local customs. Playing go-between for non-English-speaking parents, with schools and other social institutions, causes role conflict for kids. This, together with exposure to how North American kids are raised (with greater freedom, less parental respect, and more independence), leads some children to lose some of the traditional Puerto Rican respect for parents.

As a result, parents sometimes lose control over their children, especially teenage sons (Rodríguez 1989, Fitzpatrick 1971, Garrison 1972, Canino & Canino 1980). Some join "street gangs" in reaction to discrimination, racism and their treatment by the larger society (Mohr 1982: 124-125). Gangs provide

impromptu "societies that satisfy the need for belonging and for understandable social order. [They also] prepare their members to establish some sort of relationship to mainstream society as they grow to adulthood" (Mohr 1982: 124-125).

The violence, crime, and drug trafficking of some gangs only worsens the discrimination against Puerto Ricans by the outside world. Drugs and alcohol are sometimes used to make the poverty and discrimination they face more tolerable. Not fitting in or not being allowed to fit in by one's parents (who are operating by other cultural norms) creates an identity crisis for teens. Rejection of teens by the outer world takes its toll in various ways.[9] Drug and alcohol consumption and domestic violence sometimes represent self-hate and an attempt to dominate *someone*. For some men, they also expressed feelings of emasculation and attacks on their self-esteem by the larger society.

Gender roles undergo challenges, since in the U.S. and in some Latin American and Caribbean cities, Latina women find

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[9] In Muñoz's (1995: 40-41) discussion of Anzaldúa's 1987 book, Borderlands/La Frontera, she mentions that those facing discrimination may have to deal with an inner colonization. Internalization of the self-hate and shame taught by others in the dominant society leaves scars on their psyches—fragmenting their inner identities and sense of wholeness (Muñoz 1995: 40-41). Although Muñoz describes this for youths in Puerto Rico, it also applies to Puerto Rican youths in New York trying to make their way in the world.

work more easily than do men. As women's dependence on their husbands decrease, their husband's masculinity becomes threatened. Women's own concept of self and proper feminine behavior is also challenged by the increased assertiveness required to work outside the home in a foreign culture. Wives become less likely to tolerate affairs and abuse due to having their own income, resulting in family break-ups (Soto 1983, Grasmuck and Pessar 1991).

Females cannot be as sheltered and protected in the U.S. while attending school and work. Daughters press to be allowed to date unchaperoned like other girls their age. Increased vulnerability to male advances and reduced parental control and authority sometimes leads to teenage daughters' pregnancy. (Rodríguez 1989, Fitzpatrick 1971, Garrison 1972, Canino & Canino 1980)

Problems in school due to insufficient commitment to bilingual education using Puerto Rican culture as a reference point,[10] and the less rigorous standards for education provided by some bilingual education programs, also hinder Puerto Ricans'

[10] Rodríguez (1980) and Cómas-Díaz (1981) state that education and mental health care that acknowledges one's ethnicity in a positive way works better.

chances for success (Rodríguez 1989, U.S. Commission of Civil Rights 1980, Lares Soto 1989). Learning English as a second language causes problems, along with their teachers' and administrators' lack of understanding of their difficulties as immigrants or immigrants' children.

Some kids drop out of school due to teen pregnancy or related to gang violence or their break with the school's authority structure. Others drop out because going back and forth between the Mainland and the Island results in getting left back grades for time missed from school in each place, as well as the difficulty adjusting to the differences between the Puerto Rican and North American school systems (Muñoz 1995).

The negative attention that gang life, teen pregnancy, high school drop-outs, and welfare dependency draw is generalized into stereotypes that all Puerto Ricans live this way, especially in New York. As one female participant reported, Puerto Ricans have been treated "like dirt" because they were thought to be "a docile people," with "no backbone," or pride.

> She "would like to see them stand on their own and not be pushed around by anyone. [They are] thought not bright, [and] may have been experimented on—used as guinea pigs. [She thinks they should be] independent—that's the one thing [she does not]

> know, if [Puerto Ricans are]stifled by [their] relationship with [the] U.S. The [U.S.] may be tricking and not helping [the Island]. There is a negative stereotype of Puerto Rican families as lazy, uneducated, not aggressive enough, (what [she] saw in New York)—[There is a] stereotype of [families with] 13 kids. [They] need to stick up for one another. Docile, todo la buena de Díos , all the good of God—whatever the Lord sends—fatalism, you are how you are raised."

This participant, who grew up in New York, but also spent time on the Island, feels that some Puerto Ricans are like that due to discrimination, but that they need to take some responsibility to break the cycle. Staying among the Puerto Rican ethnic enclaves helps protect people from the some of the larger society's discrimination, but it also prevents new immigrants from feeling the need to assimilate as much in the sheltered and fairly self-sufficient *barrios* . (Mohr 1928)

Bilingual education programs also create their own generalized Latino ethnic enclave. In the *barrio*, Spanish-speakers can continue speaking Spanish, without much need to learn English, and code-switching between Spanish and English, or combining the two to form "Spanglish"[11] is acceptable. But if Puerto Ricans leave the barrio for work or school, they are subject

[11] "Spanglish" is a mixture of English and Spanish or poor English and poor Spanish.

to culture shock, ethnocentrism, racism, and linguistic difficulties regarding understanding others or being understood themselves. As stated by one respondent:

> There is bias there [on the Island] too but not the same kind of bias as in New York. In New York, I was in a Puerto Rican Barrio—sheltered—I was shocked when I went out of it to work. I had to learn two languages. My English was not very good or my Spanish—not all Puerto Ricans [are] like that but most of ones [I] grew up with were.

The barrio is also often seen as part of "inner city" "subculture" (Mohr 1982: 124). Racism of the dominant society lumps Puerto Ricans with the already established African American community. As a result many Puerto Ricans identify with African Americans.

Data on Ethnographic Samples

This paper is based on the results of an ethnographic study of 41 Island residents[12] and 65 Puerto Ricans in Southern California[13], carried out in 1997-98, and a review of the relevant literature on Puerto Rican identity. Samples were obtained through opportunistic and snowball sampling. Participants included in this

[12] This 41 breaks down into 39 Full Puerto Ricans and 2 Half Puerto Ricans on the Island.

[13] This 65 breaks down into 56 Full Puerto Ricans and 9 Half Puerto Ricans in California.

analysis had at least one Puerto Rican parent. Ninety percent (n=95) of the total sample was full Puerto Rican, and the rest had one Puerto Rican parent (n=11). What ethnic or national identity participants claimed, and how traditional or (North) Americanized they rated themselves were examined. Participants were asked to define what things constitute a "true" Puerto Rican and a "true" Puerto Rican-American. Tables A and B show some sample characteristics. Age differences between samples were not significant. Participants' ages ranged from 22 to 75 years old, with a mean of 48 years. The Island sample was 63% male, and the California sample was 62% female, for a Total sample that was 52% female and 48% male. See Tables A and B.

Although the Mainland sample was based in California, not New York, Nuyoricans became important because a large number of the California participants came from the New York/New Jersey area, as did some of the Island participants.[14] In addition, Islanders' comments about Nuyoricans made to the researcher

[14]At least 20 participants in the California Sample were born in New York, and 21 grew up at least part of the time in the New York/New Jersey area, while another 4 spent some time living in the area. Of Island participants, 4 were born in the New York/New Jersey area, 4 grew up there, and 4 more spent time living there. This is without counting those briefly visiting New York.

identified Nuyoricans as a source of concern and a challenge to Puerto Rican identity. These comments will be discussed next.

What Studying Nuyoricans Can Tell Us:

Why does discourse by Puerto Ricans on "Nuyoricans" exist? According to Foucault (1990), when a great deal of discourse exists on a topic, this reflects an area that provokes anxiety in a population. Competing discourses represent a power struggle of different groups trying to make their opinions the dominant ideology. Likewise, Arteaga (1994: 1) states that "the articulations of languages [such as bilingualism]...and that of social discourses...participate in the push and pull struggle to define some version of 'self' over and against some 'other.'" He states "that these linguistic and discursive relationships manifest active displacements of power, power that must be reinforced continually to maintain a particular image of the world and hierarchy of relationships," especially under colonialism (Arteaga 1994: 1). This explains part of the anxiety produced by Nuyoricans' unorthodox use of English and Spanish and hybrid culture.

How Nuyoricans are discussed is important to consider because such discourse constructs and justifies their place as social outcasts in Post-Colonial Puerto Rican society. One must examine whether people define Nuyoricans in positive or negative terms, by presence or absence of cultural traits, or talk about them in neutral terms, to reveal attitudes towards those labeled Nuyoricans. Another point of interest is whether people embrace or refuse the term, and who they think has the right to assign it. Do they give their own opinion more, less, or the same weight as others' opinions? An additional factor is whether participants' experience in New York involve stereotypes of Puerto Ricans or Nuyoricans, discrimination against them, and what things define a Puerto Rican, Puerto Rican-American, or Nuyorican. The meanings associated with the term "Nuyorican" reveal a lot about Puerto Rican and Puerto Rican-American self-definition, as well as getting at the nature of Puerto Rican authenticity, and the affect of North American dominance of the Island.

The Nuyorican As Cultural Traitor

There may be a sense that those who show the hybrid culture of the Nuyorican have abandoned traditional resistance to

colonialism and given in to North-Americanizing forces.[15] Thus, some Puerto Ricans may see Nuyoricans as traitors to traditional Puerto Rican culture, or co-conspirators hastening its demise.

For instance, Islanders' most damning criticism of Nuyoricans is having abandoned the Spanish language, or not having learned it 'properly.' Other customs may also have been abandoned, but language is felt to get at the heart and soul of Puerto Rican culture. Islanders waged a fierce political battle to regain the right to use Spanish as the official language and language of instruction, and the continued use of Spanish is regarded as a critical political issue (Morris 1995).

Islanders who commented on Nuyoricans to the researcher were either curious and/or worried about what people who had not spent time on the Island thought about Puerto Ricans. They seemed especially concerned that non-Puerto Ricans would generalize from the (often) negative stereotype of the Puerto Ricans living in New York (that depicted them living on welfare, associated with

[15] However, Flores (1993) thinks hybridity or "borderness" represents a form of colonial resistance to (North) 'Americanization' in the refusal to be neatly pigeon-holed into one category, and a striving for dignity on one's own terms.

drugs, in gangs, not speaking proper English or Spanish, and not very educated), to assume that all Puerto Ricans are like that.

While this perception of Puerto Ricans probably grossly overstates the actual situation, it is true that some people raised or living a long time on the Mainland, especially in New York, did show some differences in language and other practices. It is revealing, however, that some Island Puerto Ricans feel threatened that others think all Puerto Ricans fit the negative stereotype of Nuyoricans, and stated that Nuyoricans do not represent Puerto Ricans well. For example, a participant claimed one could "find [at least a family of] Puerto Ricans all over the world…[The] ones who go away are professionals, except those who went to New York—[They are] trapped there [by poverty and welfare dependency and] tend to give Puerto Ricans a bad reputation."

Discrimination in the Homeland: Puerto Rican Criticisms of Nuyoricans and The Question of Authenticity

Islanders tend to believe that people who live a long time or grow up in New York are not or are no longer 'real' Puerto Ricans, because they have become too (North) Americanized. Morris' (1995) Puerto Rican Island informants state that Puerto Ricans in

New York are different, and "Nuyoricans" do not fit in upon return to the Island. They speak English on the Island rather than Spanish (which is generally expected), watch cable T.V. (in English), celebrate Christmas with Santa Claus rather than with the Three Kings, and do not relate well to Islanders (Morris 1995: 124-125, Mohr 1982).[16]

One difference noticed by the Urban North American researcher was the amount of privacy people expected, amount of gossiping they did, and noise level to which people were accustomed on the Island versus the Mainland (at least in big cities). According to one informant, it was normal on the Island for neighbors to contribute unsolicited opinions to other neighbor's family members about who was right and what the real problem was after over-hearing a family argument. Another informant said that it is very common for things to go through the rumor-mill. However, on a flight back to the Mainland, a Puerto Rican who grew up on the Island but moved to Florida in his early twenties

[16] Mohr (1982) also mentions stories written about some Nuyoricans sophisticates seeking each other out on the Island and participating in moral decay, rather than re-adjusting and living according to Island norms. Only those who re-adjusted to Island norms and lifestyle made a successful return to the Island to become once again part of its community. These fictional stories are probably gross exaggerations, but they reveal some fundamental differences in values between Nuyoricans and Islanders that there is felt to be.

volunteered to the researcher's husband that now that he is used to the U.S., he can not take living with all the gossip, lack of privacy and noise on the Island. He only visits now.

Islanders see Nuyoricans as deficient, and a "strange mixture that we [can not] say is Puerto Rican because that [is] not the real Puerto Rican..." (Participant in Morris 1995: 124-125). They were thought to not fit in on the Mainland either, and to be a subgroup that does not really belong anywhere. One woman reported being told, "You're like some kind of savage that the Americans put together" (from bits and pieces of the two cultures).

It is likely that by critiquing Nuyoricans, Puerto Rican Islanders are actually critiquing the North American cultural influence, to some degree. They are protesting Puerto Ricans assimilation into the Mainland culture. Many also fear Nuyoricans will spread Mainland culture to the Island with their return. It is a critique of the perceived materialistic, racist, and ethnocentric elements in the dominant North American culture, its cultural values of independence, impersonalism, autonomy, and rugged individualism, as well as its fast-paced urban life and Protestant and Capitalistic ethos. It is also expresses the threat that these values may come to replace traditional Puerto Rican values of

respect for and the importance of family, extending family to include others through the systems of *personalismo*[17] and *compadrazco* (Godparenthood), and the dignity of each person regardless of social status or color. Also felt threatened are rural values and the Island's Catholic ethos.

Conclusion

This paper has discussed the discrimination faced by Nuyoricans, and why other Puerto Ricāns put them down. Discourse on Nuyoricans, "True" Puerto Ricans, "True" Puerto Rican-Americans, and stereotypes about Nuyoricans are particularly revealing of how Puerto Ricans view themselves and want others to view them. Conflicting views on what a Puerto Rican is and should be, and whether Puerto Rican-Americans can still be considered "real" Puerto Ricans are unveiled. It is significant that only one participant in this study embraced and identified with the Nuyorican label, while others to whom it could have been applied rejected and felt insulted by this label (because they felt it implied that they were not 'real' Puerto Ricans).

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[17] Relationships based on personal, face to face contact.